Baby Sleep Training Guide You Need To Know

Baby Sleep Training Tip #1 - MOST IMPORTANT OF ALL!

The best baby advice I can give is to do anything - and I mean ANYTHING - you can to prevent your baby from becoming over-tired. A tired baby is one thing, an over-tired baby is quite another and can be a very difficult situation to handle. So when it comes to training your baby to sleep, what's the name of the game?

PREVENTION IS BETTER THAN A CURE!

Once you see and hear that your baby is tired it's vital you commence settling him to sleep before he gets past the point of tiredness into that over-tired stage.

Baby Sleep Training Tip #2 - How Do You Know Your Baby Is Tired?

As new parents with a newborn baby it may not be so obvious that your baby is crying because he is tired. The aim is to recognise the tired signs and tone of the cry early in order to prevent over-tiredness.

So what are the signs he is tired?

- He is crying - listen for the tone of the cry
- He seems clumsy - easier to tell in an older baby
- He has recently been fed so is not hungry
- He has no wind
- He is comfortable - not too hot and not too cold
- He has a clean diaper
- He is not over or under-stimulated
- He has been awake for a while

As your baby hits the three-month mark it becomes a little easier as he will gave you the tired sign by rubbing his eyes.

Baby Sleep Training Tip #3 - Figure Out Which Techniques Work Best For You And Your Baby

Different babies may respond differently to the various techniques you can use to encourage sleep, so the sooner you determine which work best for you the better for everyone's sake! Here are several ways to help your baby sleep:

Training Your Baby To Sleep Where He Will Wake Up

If possible, it's best to settle your baby in the same place as he will wake up, ie in his bassinet or cot, not on your chest so you then have to relocate him once he's fallen asleep. If this doesn't happen he is more likely to cry as soon as he wakes up as he may not know where he is or where you are. If he knows where he is he's more likely to continue peacefully into his second sleep cycle (a sleep cycle in a baby lasts for about 45 minutes).

Training Your Baby To Sleep By Rocking Him

- Put your hand on your baby's tummy or chest and rock him from side to side. Don't be too rough but also don't be too gentle, newborn babies like this movement and he will not break with your hand moving backwards and forwards.
- Persevere with the rocking even if your baby is screaming and it doesn't appear to be working. Generally newborn babies don't fall asleep instantly and need some time to unwind, just like adults. Often it can seem like you are fighting a losing battle, but if you persevere just a little bit longer the magic will happen

Training Your Baby To Sleep By Singing

One of the best things about babies is that they are not critical, and they really don't care about your singing ability! Your baby will find your soft voice soothing as it's something she recognizes and feels comfortable with. Sing the same lullaby each time you train her to sleep as she will appreciate the familiarity and will like the repetition, and will quickly understand that when you sing that lullaby it's time for her to go to sleep.

Training Your Baby To Sleep With Music

Some parents find putting on the same CD at the right time is effective in training their baby to sleep, however be warned this can make it very difficult to get your baby to sleep without the music - which you may regret when it's sleeping time and you are not at home.

Training Your Baby To Sleep In Comfort

It probably goes without saying that your baby needs to be given every reason to be happy and relaxed in order to fall asleep. This means making her comfortable so that she is not too hot or cold. If she is used to using a pacifier (or dummy) then give it to her to help her stay calm for comfort.

Training Your Baby To Sleep By Staying Calm

One thing that worked well for me was recognizing when I was starting to panic that my baby wouldn't go to sleep. If your baby feels you are not relaxed he will find it more difficult to settle as he will pick up on your emotional state.

If you are holding your baby make sure you breathe calmly using slow, deep breaths. You may not feel calm but you need to pretend you are for as long as it takes for your baby to fall asleep, ie fake it 'til you make it!

Baby Sleep Training Tip #4

A baby's sleep cycle lasts just 45 minutes, and as a new parent you'll soon realize that a newborn baby needs more than one sleep cycle to be content in order to be happy and awake. If your baby wakes up and cries after his first sleep cycle, go into his room and settle him back to sleep again. You may pick him up briefly for a quick cuddle but as per before, it's better that he falls asleep in the same position he will wake up.

Baby Sleep Training Tip #5

If you are out and about and your baby is tired, a pram is a great place to sleep. The natural movement of the pram should help your baby sleep so if you're not walking anyway, still move the pram so the rocking movement will have the effect of settling your baby.

Some babies also sleep well in a car for the same reason.

I have no doubt that if you put these baby sleep training tips to good use they will work for you - best of luck!